

Tips during Electricity Shortages and Blackouts

To avoid a power outage during periods of stress to the electrical system, such as extreme temperatures:

- People should use fans instead of air conditioning if possible.
- Those who need to use air conditioning should set the thermostat at the highest comfortable temperature.
- Lower the thermostat setting for electric water heaters.
- Refrain from using major appliances, such as electric dryers, ranges, washing machines, dishwashers and dehumidifiers, during the daytime.
- Turn off unnecessary lights and refrain from using computers.
- Clean or replace furnace and air conditioner filters once a month during heating/cooling season.

When adding a programmable thermostat or replacing a furnace, air conditioner, or heat pump, look for the Energy Star label. You can get additional information from the yellow EnergyGuide label to compare every model in a category, its capacity, and estimated yearly energy cost.

If there is an electricity outage:

- Turn off major equipment to avoid stressing the system when power is restored.
- When power is restored, turn appliances and other equipment on one at a time.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep food cold for as long as possible.
- Keep windows and doors closed and close drapes and blinds to keep cool air inside the house. Later, open the windows when it is cooler outside.
- Drive with extra caution. Many stoplights will be out and visibility will be reduced at night when streetlights out.
- If you have a backup generator, make sure it is not venting exhaust gases into the house.

It is always a good idea to have an emergency kit with several flashlights and spare batteries. An emergency kit should also contain a battery-powered radio so that you can continue to get news and updates. If you chose to use candles, use extreme caution to avoid accidentally starting a fire. To learn more about how to save energy, visit the U.S. Department of Energy's consumer information webpage at http://www.eren.doe.gov/consumerinfo/energy_savers/